

Outline for a typical *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

1. Program overview

Overall logic: guiding philosophy and orientation of the program
Program areas, levels, specialties, and options
Brief history of the program
Program demographics
Table of enrollment trends, numbers and types of students, numbers of faculty and types, etc.

2. Claims and Rationale

Statement of the claims (consistent with all relevant claims in the program's literature)
Reasons why the program thinks its assessments are valid and that the passing scores are appropriate

3. Method of assessment

Detailed description of the assessments
Criteria for achievement or success
Published information about the reliability and validity of the assessments
Arguments for the content validity of the assessments
Sampling procedure and procurement of evidence

4. Results

Results of the investigation into the reliability and validity of the assessments
Evidence of stability and consistency of the measures
Evidence of relationship, convergence, triangulation with other measures or evidence
Results of the assessments with attention to the following issues:
a. Significant digits
b. Ranges of the scores and their variance
c. Disaggregation of evidence
d. Accurate and comprehensive table headings
e. Sensitivity to insignificant differences
f. Full disclosure of available evidence (all of the program's cited evidence)
g. Evidence for each claim

5. Discussion and Plan

Discussion

Meaning of the results: Were the claims supported? Were the results good news or bad news?
Implications of the results for the program's design

Plan

Steps to be taken based on the evidence: modifications to the program, quality control system (QCS), plans for inquiry into the factors responsible for the results.

6. References

A list of any works cited in the *Brief*

7. Appendices

Appendix A: Internal audit report

Introduction: Auditors; faculty approval
Description: Schematic and mechanisms of QCS
Procedure: Audit plan and trail
Findings: Discoveries about the QCS
Conclusions: How well does QCS work?
Discussion: Needed modifications in QCS or future audit procedures

Appendix B: Capacity

Evidence that the program is supported on a par with other programs at the institution 3.1
Evidence that the program's capacity is sufficient and adequate to satisfy 3.2

Appendix C: Qualifications of the faculty

Current academic rank and title
Terminal degree, institution, field, and date
Number of years of service
Scholarly publications (number, type)
Assigned courses in the program
Awards, public school teaching, boards

Appendix D: Program requirements

Admissions requirements
Course requirements and standards
Course titles and descriptions
Program standards and requirements
Graduation requirements
State license requirements
Alignment of program requirements with state and national standards

Appendix E: Full disclosure of all relevant and available evidence (including any evidence cited elsewhere in support of, or about, the program)

- a. Grades
- b. Standardized tests (entrance, exit, and license) about the graduates or the graduates' own students
- c. Surveys of students, alumni, employers
- d. Ratings of portfolios, work samples, cases
- e. Basis for rates: hiring/promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc.
- f. Reasons for neglecting or rejecting certain categories of evidence
- g. Plan for inclusion of new categories of evidence in a subsequent *Inquiry Brief*

Appendix F: copies of locally developed assessment instruments cited in the *Brief*

Appendix G: status of educator programs accredited by other USDE or CHEA recognized accreditors